THE MINISTER OF STAE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Room for new stock of foodgrains

2643. SHRI PREM CHAND GUPTA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are yet to empty the granaries to make room for new stocks of foodgrains in the market even as the paddy procurement season is on ;

(b) whether it would take nearly three years to empty the godowns which hold a staggering 1.5 crore metric tonnes of wheat going by the current rate at which the wheat stock is being moved ; and

(c) if so, what action Government are taking to tackle this problem ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) Sufficient storage capacity is being made available to receive new foodgrains stocks.

(b) The wheat stocks available in the Central Pool (as on 1-10-2001) is 36.8 million tonnes as against a buffer norm of 11.6 million tonnes.

The offtake of foodgrains (under all Schemes) during the last three years is as follows :

(in million tonnes)

Year	Offtake of wheat
1999-2000	9.9
2000-2001	6.6
2001-2002	8.2*
(* Projeted upto 31-3-2001)	
TOTAL	24.7

At the current rate of off-take it is expected that the present surplus stock of wheat above the buffer norms can be liquidated in the next three years.

(c) The Government has taken the following steps to utilize foodgrains over and above the buffer norms :—

(1) Increased allocation of foodgrains @ 25 Kg. per family per month under BPL.

(2) Reduction in Central Issue Price w.e.f. 25th July, 2000 and further reduction in APL prices by 30% during July, 2001.

(3) Offering of wheat and rice at rice lower than economic cost under open sale.

(4) Issues under various Welfare Schemes like Mid Day Meal, Nutrition Programme, Food for Work, Annapurna and Indigent people (Destitute Women & Children), SC/ST & OBC Hostel etc; at BPL prices instead of economic price.

(5) Wheat and rice are being issued @ Rs. 2/- and Rs. 3/- per Kg. of respectively under Antodya Scheme.

(6) Export of wheat and rice at prices lower than economic cost.

(7) Wheat and rice is also being issued under Sampooran Gramin Rojgar Yojana in the State of Chhattisgarh, Haryana, Punjab and Uttar Pradesh sponsored by the Ministry of Rural Development.

PDS in rural and tribal areas of Andhra Pradesh

2644. DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO : Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) the measures initiated by Government for strengthening PDS in the rural and tribal areas of Andhra Pradesh; and

(b) the role being played by the State Government in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN) : (a) Government has undertaken a series of measures to strengthen the